

A. G. Burton

THE

AMERICAN CONFLICT

AS SEEN

FROM A EUROPEAN POINT OF VIEW.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED AT ST. JOHNSBURY, VT., JUNE 4, 1863,

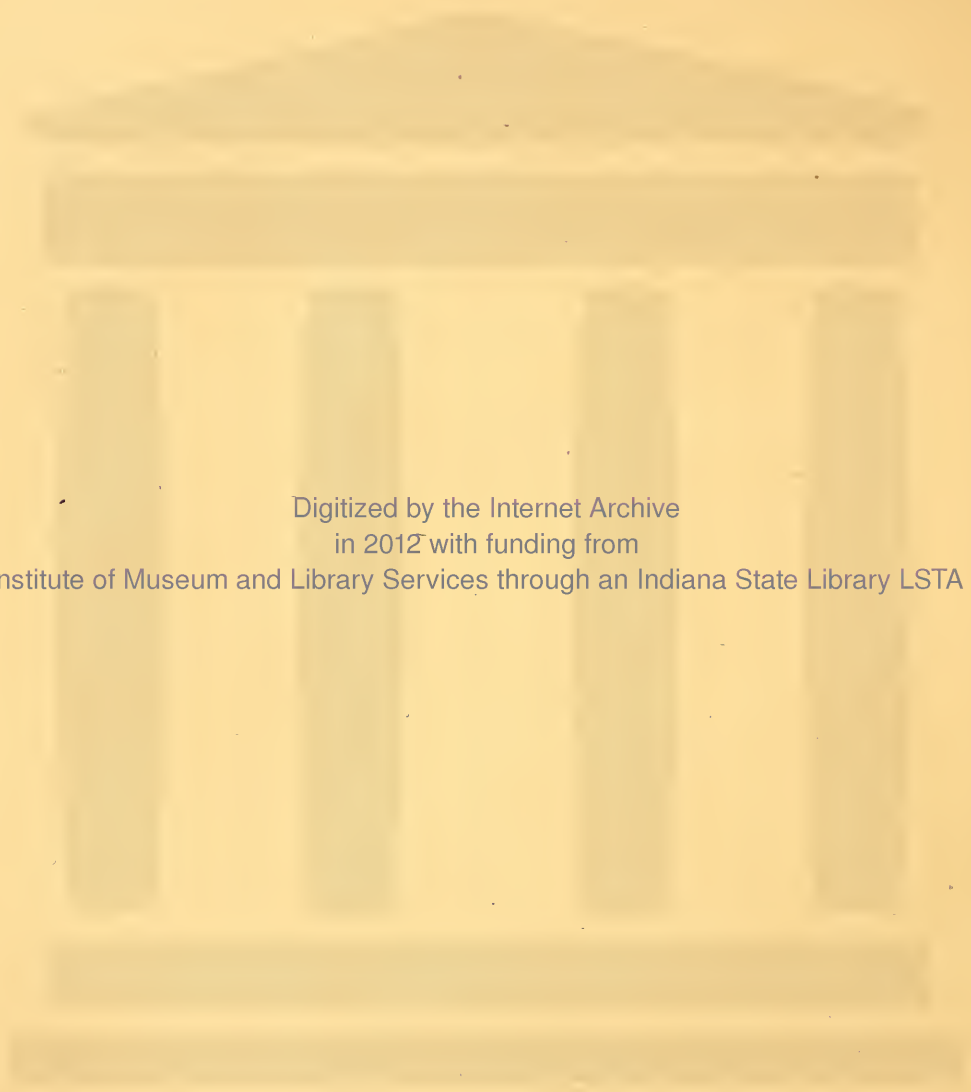
BY CHARLES FAIRBANKS.

BOSTON:

PRESS OF GEO. C. RAND & AVERY, No. 3 CORNHILL.

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Garrett Biblical Institute
Evanston, Illinois

APR 30 1923

MR. CHARLES FAIRBANKS, —

DEAR SIR: — In view of your recent return from abroad, after a somewhat protracted stay, your enlarged opportunity of learning English feeling, and your earnest effort to enlighten it while there, we take the liberty to request for publication the thoughts and illustrations upon the present American struggle which we have heard from you, in your address on the evening of June 4, 1863.

We desire to preserve and peruse them, as do many who failed to be present on that occasion; believing that a more correct sentiment, in regard to the feeling of the masses of England toward this country, in its present difficulties, will thereby be developed.

With sincere wishes for your health and happiness,

We are truly,

Your friends,

LUKE P. POLAND,
J. C. TIBBETS,
JONA. D. ABBOTT,
and others.

HON. LUKE P. POLAND, LL. D., HON. J. C. TIBBETS, HON. JONA. D. ABBOTT,
AND OTHERS, —

GENTLEMEN: — With thanks for your courteous request, I place the manuscript of my lecture at your disposal; and if the statements and views therein expressed shall contribute in any degree to a better understanding of British opinion and feeling toward our country, my object will have been attained.

I remain, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES FAIRBANKS.

ST. JOHNSBURY, June 20, 1863.

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LECTURE.

“In the old city of Bristol, in England, there is an interesting memento of the past, — the Leaning Tower of Temple Church. This tower has less inclination than the Leaning Tower of Pisa, in Italy; but still it leans very considerably, and presents to the passer-by a rather threatening aspect. It is possible for people to view that object in very different lights, from different stand-points, and give very conflicting accounts of it, and yet each one of them be true and honest. Seen from the elevation of Brandon Hill it presents one form: a square, substantial, perpendicular, honest tower, without a particle of inclination, — representing firmness and solidity. Seen at an angle from an elevation on St. Michael’s Hill, it might be suspected of not being perfectly upright, and possibly might be mistaken, on some foggy morning, not unusual in Bristol, for an octagon, or one of very different style from that shown from the previous point of observation. From the far-off heights beyond Bedminster, still another appearance would be presented; and from the distance and position of Downend, the intervening objects might cut off the view altogether. Thus from each of these points, very different impressions would be derived from the appearance of that tower; and from one point, some might be led, from aught they could perceive from their own knowledge or sight, to doubt its existence altogether. Room is thus opened for a discrepancy of opinion, and for honest doubt, and room for faith.

“Every one of the different viewers might take notes of their observations, write learned essays upon the subject, and make contradictory statements; yet every statement might be true, and every man an honest man. A controversy might be carried on in regard to the tower, very earnest, very confident, and very foolish also; especially if they fell to abusing each other for not seeing every one everything alike.”

It is my purpose at the present time, in a somewhat cursory and rambling manner, to review the American conflict from a European point of observation; and I have availed myself of these reflections of the essayist, for the purpose of establishing a position where we may rest, while I ask your patient attention to whatever statements or opinions I may have occasion to advance,

even though they may not in every instance coincide with your own preconceived ideas.

It is well known to all Americans, that since the commencement of the present war, our country has had but few friends in Europe ; that from those countries which were professedly our warmest friends but three short years ago, we have received unsparing abuse and but little sympathy. Before indulging in the indignation which this fact is calculated to arouse, let us examine very briefly our previous history and standing among the nations of the earth, and see what claim we had upon the good-will of other nations.

Some two or three centuries ago, — it is not essential here to be exact with dates, — Europe was beating and throbbing with the new lights of science, of religion, and coming liberty. The darkness of former ages was beginning to be dispelled by the light of the Lutheran Reformation. The despotic governments of the Old World, jealous of the rising power of popular education, and of the spirit of inquiry which it evoked, became more oppressive than ever in their attempts to smother the flame of liberty. Aided by the machinations of the Church of Rome, they pursued a system of persecutions, which rendered life itself irksome and insecure to all inquirers after truth.

After enduring for years the most bitter persecutions, a small band of the apostles of liberty took refuge in the New World, where they might enjoy that freedom of conscience and of action which they conceived to be the birthright of every human being. Emigration became rapid ; other colonies were soon formed ; they flourished, and in the course of time, and after a prolonged struggle, threw off the yoke of the Old World, and launched forth as a free Republic. Their declaration

of independence announced to all the world the right of every man to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Their government rested upon the broad assertion of equal political rights and immunities; and they challenged the world to admire this, the most perfect government that the sun ever shone upon! In *theory* it *was* perfect. Nothing short of divine government could be finer than for man to recognize his fellow-man as his brother, and to acknowledge his right to equal privileges and protection.

This, then, was the origin of the American people and of the American government; and this the mission which they proclaimed as especially their own. Let us now inquire in what manner and to what extent this mission has been fulfilled. Let us examine how faithfully we have followed out our programme of establishing a free nation. Let us be candid in this inquiry, admitting without extenuation whatever our worst enemies may bring against us as being manifestly inconsistent with our professions and declarations; for in this way alone can we discriminate between the well-intentioned criticisms and remonstrances of our friends in other lands, and the malignant misrepresentations of our enemies; and in this way alone can we afterward appeal to the candor of the outside world for a favorable judgment upon our present course of action.

The very first step we take then in our inquiry reveals to us an inconsistency as fundamental as the very corner-stone of our edifice. We made a declaration of freedom and of equal rights, and at the same time recognized and tolerated a system of human slavery. We opened an asylum for the down-trodden of Europe, and invited them to share with us the largest liberty; while for the benighted children of Africa we tolerated a sys-

tem of oppression, which, in point of cruelty and injustice, has scarcely been equalled in any other country on earth. By a portion of our people this was not, it is true, done willingly, but under the force of a supposed necessity. Slavery had been introduced into the colonies by Dutch and English traders, and it had become an institution too formidable to be dealt with summarily at the establishment of the Federal Union. But there is the most convincing and gratifying evidence to prove that the leading patriots of those early days were opposed to the system of slavery, and desired its overthrow.

Thus early slavery was engrafted upon our tree of Liberty, — a cancerous, deadly parasite, — which, it was hoped, would soon be smothered by the more vigorous growth of free civilization, but which, instead of yielding to the advance of civilization, itself increased and extended with alarming rapidity, until it nearly involved us in ruin; indeed, it is yet to be determined whether this ruin is not irretrievable.

We know that the South was more directly responsible for this great national crime, and that of late she has openly justified herself in it, and gloried in the shame and ruin it has entailed upon the nation. But it concerns us now to review the part which we of the North, — who now alone represent the nation called the United States — took, in encouragement of slavery, through these many years of our history.

In looking back upon that history — spread out as upon a vast political chart — we see that during the whole rise and progress of the Republic, “We have been exposed to a class of temptations, evils, and trials, to which the past furnishes no parallel. The Slave Power of America is without a parallel. It was a class of slave-

holders in a Republic, where the creation of the power rests with the people, and they an intriguing and conspiring part of that power. This Slave Power attempted to become, and did become, the governor of the government. The nation was divided into parties,—the slaveholders so nominally; but the Slave *Power* was always a unity. Whichever party came into office, this power came in with it. It adjusted itself with wonderful adroitness from the back of the retiring party to the neck of the in-coming one. It would ride the government as the Old Man of the Mountain rode the back of Sinbad the Sailor. The union of the states, with these slaveholders, was of no value, unless they could make it subserve the end of perpetuating slavery. The Constitution was nothing to them, only as they interpreted it as a guaranty of slavery. To them it was like the bond to Shylock, giving them the ‘pound of flesh,’ as they interpreted it; and the pound of flesh they would have, because it was ‘nominated in the bond.’ They were never sticklers for the Constitution on any other ground; and they even violated it in times innumerable, in their intercourse with the North. They would play fast and loose upon it, in their party policy, to perplex the councils of the North, and to *divide* that they might conquer.”

This settled purpose of the slave oligarchy was impudently proclaimed by John Randolph, of Virginia, during the debate in Congress on the Missouri question in 1820.

Said he, — “We know what we are doing. *We* of the South are *always united*, from the Ohio to Florida; and we always *can* unite; but you of the North are beginning to divide. We have conquered you once, and we can and will conquer you again. Ay, Sir, we will drive

you to the wall ; and when we have you there once more, we will keep you there, and nail you down like base money."

This is the line of policy which the Slave Power has pursued with unrelenting perseverance from the very beginning. *Our* great fault lay in losing that "reverence for liberty which was the vital principle of our Republic." The record of our gradual apostasy from the faith of the fathers, and from our declared principles, forms one of the most humiliating chapters in the world's history. The South had but to make a demand, and we were ready with subserviency to concede it. By a series of compromises, we allowed the most unjust aggressions to be made upon our free institutions. One after another of our statesmen of the last generation fell a victim to this overshadowing power. Society everywhere was more or less contaminated by its influence. The Church itself quailed in its presence, and seemed lost to all conscience in dealing with questions of great importance connected with it. "Our great Tract Society busied itself with issuing tracts against the minor vices of tobacco-chewing and dancing, but could utter not one word against the crime of breeding and selling human slaves, like cattle, for the market." Not a word could it utter against the great crime of holding in perpetual bondage four millions of human beings, whose right to freedom was as clear as our own. The whole North, with but few exceptions, seemed at last to be under the wild hallucination that the salvation of our country depended upon the utter submission of the people to the demands of the Slave Power ; and we have only to revert to those dark days of political prostitution and poltroonery, to be sickened forever of our base complicity with slavery.

What wonder that the Old World stood aghast at our apostasy? In vain could we point to our progress in education, in civilization, and in material growth. The outside world judged us by this one enormous crime; and its verdict was, that any nation, which, in the middle of the nineteenth century, can look with complacency upon the fact that one eighth part of her population is consigned to hopeless bondage, and denied the light of education and of Christianity, has no claim to rank herself among the civilized nations of the earth! This verdict might cut to the very foundation of our national pride; we might wince and writhe under the stigma which it implies, but we could not escape it. While the fact which called it out should remain, so long would the verdict remain, with all the fixedness of an eternal truth!

I have not drawn this picture for the purpose of upbraiding any particular class, or of stirring up political strife. We are, as a people, *all* more or less responsible for our connivance with slavery; and our confession should be general and hearty. But my purpose, in this brief review, has been partly to draw attention to some of the influences which have operated to our disadvantage in Europe during the past twenty-five years. On the breaking out of the war, our people were astonished to find the European mind so apathetic in quarters where we thought we had reason to expect prompt sympathy. That there should be apathy, and even hostility, among the aristocracies of the Old World, was nothing so very strange; but we could not account for the utter absence of feeling on the part of the liberal and religious middle classes, who so nearly correspond in feeling and character to the substantial portion of our

own countrymen. There were many reasons for this, an examination of which will show that this apathy, though not altogether right, was, on the whole, quite natural.

In the first place, I have reason to believe, notwithstanding the appearances to the contrary, that the abhorrence of slavery among the people of England, previous to our troubles, was genuine and sincere. They had cleared their own skirts of this great abomination, and were impatient for the time to come when America should follow their example. They remonstrated with and censured us of the North for our complicity with the South. The tone of these rebukes was sometimes dictatorial, and almost always patronizing; as is the wont of John Bull when speaking to Brother Jonathan. Englishmen are so thoroughly imbued with the belief that they are superior, as a race, to any other people, that they can hardly do otherwise than to assume a lofty tone, whenever they feel called upon to address their neighbors upon any moral or political subject; and toward America especially, since she is so young a nation, they carry themselves with the bearing of very high superiority.

A striking instance of this occurred a few months ago, when Earl Russell, as Foreign Secretary, remonstrated with our government for setting aside the writ of habeas corpus, in the arrest of political offenders. He had the bad taste to call in question the right of Mr. Lincoln, under the Constitution, to make such arrests; the *crown lawyers of England!* having failed to discover, either in the Constitution or the laws of the United States, any authority for the exercise of such power. Now, if this arrogance was characteristic of *British* diplomacy, it is gratifying to feel that Mr. Seward's reply was equally characteristic of *American* diplomacy.

His answer was, in substance, that we are quite capable of understanding our own Constitution and laws, and that the British government can hardly expect us to accept of their interpretation of them for our rule of guidance.

The remonstrances of British anti-slavery people, though needful, and in the main well-meant, were received by us with ill-favor; and our replies were such as to create the impression in England that we were unnecessarily sensitive and captious. Again, the public mind of England has been misled, during many past years, by partial and one-sided statements in regard to the state of public sentiment in the Northern States, upon the slavery question. American abolitionists, of the more radical kind, who have become embittered by non-success, and perhaps persecutions, at home, have visited Europe, and given half true and half false accounts, — false because half the truth was suppressed. *Suppressio veri, suggestio falsi.* In their severe animadversions upon the apostasy of the churches in the North, they have very unfairly and uncharitably failed to bear testimony to the healthy change that has been going on amongst our people within the past few years. Again, fugitive slaves, who have escaped from the South, and found their way to the North, where they met with cruel prejudice on account of their color, have afterward gone to England, and, before sympathizing audiences, have poured out their bitter experiences, not only of slave life, but also of the treatment they have received in our Northern towns and cities; all which was calculated to convey the impression, in the absence of contradictory proof, that the Northern States were, in their oppression of the negro, nearly as cruel as the South; and that there was no such thing among our people as a desire for the emancipation of the slave.

This explanation refers only to the honest middle classes, whose good-will we have wished to cultivate, and from whom we expected a friendly response at the outbreak of our rebellion. The *leading* anti-slavery men of Great Britain, those who had claimed to be the special champions of the slave, knew our history better; and here, if we would be just, we must draw a clear line of distinction between those who masked their hatred of America under a pretended love for the slave, and those who should and would have been our friends, if they could have been assured that we were true to the principles of freedom. We can find no language strong enough to express the indignation which we owe to such men as Lord Brougham, the Earl of Shaftesbury, the late Sir Culling Eardley, and others of the British Anti-Slavery Society, who have been querulously chiding us for the last quarter of a century for our indifference to the cause of emancipation; but who now no sooner see their recommendations in a fair way to be realized, than they turn about and throw the whole weight of their influence into the scale to thwart this glorious reform. In their eagerness to see a growing Republic torn asunder, and free institutions crushed, they turn recreant to their life-long professions, and become in fact the upholders of slavery. Their former professions — the pharisaical self complacency with which they have long claimed to be, *par excellence*, the world-wide champions of freedom — only serve to render their present defection all the more contemptible. We do right therefore to hold them up to scorn.

But while these representative men were well aware of the change of sentiment in the Northern States, they were careful to hide this knowledge, as far as possible, from the great mass of the people. At the com-

mencement of the war, the people of England were as ignorant of the questions connected with our last Presidential election, and of those questions which led to the secession of the Southern States, as the masses of our own country were of the details of Mexican politics prior to the French invasion of that Republic; and their ignorance made them easy dupes to the pro-slavery influence which was exerted at an early day, as if by a preconceived plan, by the government, the aristocracy, and the press. We must bear in mind then that the greater portion of the middle classes of England were sincerely possessed of the idea that the moral sentiment of our Northern people, on the slavery question, was not much better than that of the South. They knew, indeed, that we did not hold slaves; but they knew, nevertheless, that we did tolerate slavery in the District of Columbia; and that this of itself constituted us, in principle, a nation of slaveholders. They knew also that we had discouraged in every way the agitation of negro emancipation, and had shown no quarter to conscientious abolitionists; and as yet they had learned of no change on these points.

I should not fully account for the want of sympathy in England toward America, if I failed to allude to the unfavorable impression produced by many American travellers who have proved themselves our very unworthy representatives, in a social point of view. Unfortunately, those Americans who have created the greatest sensation in Europe are, for the most part, loud-mouthed Southerners, or Western men, or *parvenu* city traders, who have grown suddenly rich, — without education or refinement themselves, or the capacity of appreciating these acquirements in others; and the sin of modesty cannot be laid to their charge. Their first

and great passion is to bring themselves into the notice of the titled aristocracy, among whom they render themselves exceedingly offensive, either by sycophancy or pretension. Among the middle and lower classes, they become still more offensive by their vulgar swagger, bravado, and profanity. It may be here remarked that, whatever other vices may be charged against England, profane swearing, except in the lowest stratum of society, is not an English vice. Not that Englishmen abstain from it chiefly because of its sinfulness, but because they regard it as a low habit. They consider that profane oaths, like onions, are fit only for the mouths of the vulgar. Now, one such man as I have mentioned will bring more contempt upon us than a host of better men can overcome in a long time.

Another impression has prevailed among the people of England, which has created a feeling of resentment against us. It is, that in all the questions of difference between the two nations, within the last few years, American diplomacy has secured undue advantage over the British government, through yankee bluster and threats of war. They say that we never tire of boasting, in our annual Fourth-of-July effervescence, that we have "whipped" them twice, and that we stand ready to do it again, whenever the chance again occurs:—in fine, that we, as a nation, are forever "Yankee-doodling;" and, as a matter of course, nothing would please them more than to see some of the (what they call) "bounce" taken out of us.

We have made one great mistake in supposing that any considerable proportion of Englishmen have a leaning toward republicanism. When I first visited Europe, in 1848, England was just recovering from the fright of a threatened revolution, through the agitation of Irish

and English chartists; and in the September of that year, the respectable classes were congratulating themselves that they had passed through an unpleasant crisis. From England I went to France, where I remained through the exciting campaign which resulted in the election of Louis Napoleon to the presidency of the French Republic. The revolution there was over, and although republicanism had triumphed in name, and the Bourbon dynasty had been overthrown, reaction had already set in, and the people were longing for some settled, substantial government. Passing on to Italy, we found the republicans occupying the place of the Pope; but the influential part of the population were mourning over the unsettled state of the country, and were willing to welcome His Despotic Holiness back again, if for no other reason, that confidence might be restored, and their daily life might move on as before. In 1852-3, I spent another year in Europe,—for the most part in France. During the intervening four years between my first and second visits, the reaction had become complete. England was cured entirely of so-called “republican radicalism.” France, in 1853, cheered as loudly for the Empire, as it had done for the Republic four years previously; and republicanism in Italy was utterly dead. In this third visit,—two years of which I spent in England,—I have not met with any Britons who do not prefer their own form of government to any other. It is as much their pride and boast as is their nationality. Many have a desire indeed to bring about reforms,—such as the extension of the franchise and the introduction of the ballot;—but they have unbounded confidence in a limited monarchy; and the great majority of the middle classes believe that the present order of nobility confers upon the nation a sta-

bility and dignity which are essential to their national well-being. Of course, then, they have no partiality for our form of government; and many even of those who are far removed from aristocratic connection, and who might be supposed to favor more liberal institutions, look upon American republicanism with much distrust.

When we take into view, therefore, the several facts I have enumerated, — the ignorance and misapprehensions existing in the minds of the masses of England touching whatever is good in us, on the one hand, and on the other, the knowledge which they *do* possess concerning our shortcomings and faults, — is it wonderful that they should have failed to respond in sympathy to the uprising of the North after the bombardment of Fort Sumter? Might we not also have expected just such apathy from England on the still broader ground of human nature? Just reverse our respective positions, and see what *we* should have done under similar circumstances. Suppose that Ireland had seen fit, at any time within the last twenty-five years, to secede from England. Is there a single person here present who would not have rejoiced at Ireland's success? Should we not rejoice to see England's power weakened in any and every possible way? This is human nature. I do not say it is right; but it is natural. It is so always with rival nations, with rival traders, with rival neighbors.

Between England and America there is no political affinity. While the one is a Monarchy and the other a Democracy, there must be antagonism, fundamental and irreconcilable. The only friendship that has ever existed between the two nations has been based upon self-interest, — upon those reciprocal advantages which arise from commercial transactions; and this kind of

friendship showed its hollowness, and was sure to do so, so soon as one party or the other was overtaken by misfortune. Had England been rent in twain by civil discord, and her strength and pride humbled, America would have been elated. I must be pardoned, therefore, for expressing the opinion that the North made a sad exhibition of herself in her wailing cry for sympathy from a people whom we have so often and so cheerfully offered to *thrash*, and towards whom we have never borne much love. It was, moreover, unmanly for a great nation like ours to go begging anywhere for pity and sympathy. Pity is for the weak and the helpless; and nothing was so sure to bring contempt upon our country as this pitiable cry for the world's sympathy. Take the case of an individual. We scarcely know of a more contemptible sight than that of a man who, overtaken by worldly misfortune, or ill health, or the world's neglect or abuse, goes wandering about with a perpetual grievance, and ever ready to pour it into the ear of any listener. He has given himself up to the demoralizing snare of self-pity; and there is but little hope for him. A man thus tempted must resist this fatal snare. If for a time he is thrown *hors du combat* in life's great battle, let him endure in silence; let him not lose faith in himself, nor in mankind, nor in God; let him wait in patience, and hopefully bide his time. And this is equally the duty of a nation when overtaken by calamity.

Down to the time of which we are speaking, nothing had been presented to the minds of middle-class Englishmen which was calculated to enlist their sympathies in our behalf; but, on the contrary, what they *had* heard was directly calculated to excite their honest indignation against us. Let me not be misunderstood here as

attempting to excuse or palliate English abuse of our country and of our cause ; of that I shall have occasion to speak very shortly ; but for the present we have to explain why the honest portion of the British public could see nothing in our cause, from the information they possessed, to enlist their feelings in our favor. The only thing that could do this was wanting ; and that was, *the assurance that the North was fighting for the overthrow of slavery*. That this formed the principal gulf that separated them from us, subsequent events have most abundantly proved.

Before proceeding to speak of the means resorted to to poison the public mind of England with secession doctrines, it may be appropriate to again allude to the extreme ignorance that exists in that country in reference to American affairs ; which may account, in a great measure, for their readiness to believe whatever may be said to our prejudice.

Some rather amusing instances of this ignorance came under my own observation, most of which related to American localities ; but there were others also which had reference to our civil and political affairs.

A few weeks ago, while in London, I was turning over the leaves of a ponderous volume entitled "*Gallery of Nature, Illustrative of the Wonders of Astronomy, Physical Geography, and Geology. By the Rev. Thomas Milner, A. M., F. R. G. S., Author of 'Astronomy and Scripture,' &c., &c.*,"—when my eye chanced to fall upon the following piece of information which was quite new to me, as it may possibly be also to you. It was a description of the well-known land-slide in the Notch of the White Mountains, by which the Willey family was destroyed. The account ran thus (the italics are mine) : "A sudden and extensive land-slip occurred in the year

1826, in the White Mountains, *the name of that part of the Alleghanies which lies in New Hampshire*, one of the United States."

Among a certain class of the English with whom we came in contact, there was some curiosity to learn what they could concerning our personal affairs. They had too much good sense to address their inquiries directly to us; but our Irish maid-servant, who accompanied us from America, was frequently called into requisition to answer inquiries. At the town of Ventnor, on the Isle of Wight, our worthy landlady inquired one day of Mary if we were real natives of America (meaning the aborigines). The answer was as prompt as Irish wit could make it, "Yes; they are some of the ra-al natives." "But," said the landlady, "I thought that the native Americans were copper-colored; but your people are of very fair complexion." The answer was still the same: "I assure you they are ra-al natives."

An intelligent Englishman in London, of whom I was about to take leave, on my departure for America (this was in March), remarked,—"I suppose you will not reach New York till past mid-summer,—the voyage will be some three or four months long." On my telling him that it was only ten or twelve days, he expressed surprise; but soon explained that he had confounded the distance to America with that to Australia.

The English have frequently charged Americans with the corrupting of the English language; and many of them are surprised to find we can speak it at all. Several years ago, when the late Fenimore Cooper was in London, he was invited to a dinner party at Holland House. Lady Holland, by whose side he was seated at table, inquired of him where he learned to speak such good English. "At Billingsgate Fish-market," was the gruff reply.

Now, while it must be admitted that education is carried to a high point among a select few in England; and that among the educated classes there the language is more uniformly correct than among even our better classes; which may be accounted for by their exclusiveness and their high association, where habitual care is observed, — yet I believe that the masses of England fall far below us in general education; and, so far as the lower orders are concerned, we have no such murdering of the “Queen’s English” as is practised in the mother country. Like Cynthia Ann’s German lover, they know how to “*speek bad inglish perfickly*.”

It is this want of general information, and this narrowness of education, which render the masses of that country so stubborn in their prejudices, while at the same time they are very easily confirmed in their previously formed opinions by the most transparent humbuggery. It was this that rendered them an early and an easy prey to the secessionists and their sympathizers. Long before we had any suspicions of the designs of the South, the Southern conspirators saw the importance of moulding the public opinion of Europe to their purposes. Our foreign ambassadors and consuls, during the last two administrations, were many of them at work at their treasonable plot, preparing the ruling classes in Europe for the event which has since taken place; and, as may be supposed, these gave them their ready encouragement. Not out of any regard for the Southerners themselves, but because they saw in this scheme the destruction not only of a dangerous growing rival, but also of a hated Republic.

The South found a powerful auxiliary in the venal press of Europe, — more especially of England, — which was subsidized at an early day and brought into the

service of the confederacy. At the head of this list stood the notorious *London Times*; — a journal quite as unprincipled as our own “Satanic” *New York Herald*, but conducted with far more intellectual ability. It is owned in great part by the Jew bankers, the Rothschilds; but its chief manager and editor is one John Walter, — member of Parliament, and formerly a Jamaica barrister and slaveholder, at the present time in thorough sympathy with the slave-owners of the South, and ambitious of aristocratic connection in England. The *Times* — otherwise called the *Thunderer* — has for many years made its influence felt by its powerful invectives, and its slashing onslaughts upon everybody and every party and every cause. It systematically ridicules and opposes everything good, and is doing the work of the devil continually. It was a labor of love, therefore, for the *Times* to effect the dismemberment of our Union, and to work for the establishment of a Slave Empire in the South. To this end it has worked and is working with fiendish determination. No Englishman will admit for a moment that that journal represents British opinion. They all repudiate it as their organ, just as we repudiate the *New York Herald* as our national mouth-piece; but still the *Times* is read by all the influential classes, and is feared, and courted, and believed in, by turns, as an all-powerful oracle.

The South, by beginning early and working assiduously, succeeded in winning the sympathy of England, and in prejudicing the popular mind against the North. It is not likely that this prejudice would have taken the form of active hostility unless some overt provocation had been given by us. This unfortunately occurred in the autumn of 1861, in the seizure of Mason and Sli-dell from the British Steamer “Trent.” It was just the

very thing to bring to a climax this latent ill-will. There could have been no act planned which was so well calculated to touch the British pride in a tender spot as this desecration of their flag upon the high seas. England had been guilty of similar outrages in seizing men from American vessels; and, fifty years ago, we went to war with her, in part to avenge this very wrong; yet at the end of that war this question was left unsettled, and England did not relinquish her assumed right to seize men from our ships at her pleasure. But those events took place half a century ago, and not one in ten thousand of the present generation of Englishmen ever heard of those British outrages, which once stung to the quick the pride of our nation; or even if they had, it would have made no difference. They have been schooled to believe that they are supreme upon the ocean; that *their* "might makes right," and that their flag must be respected on the seas wherever it floats. This was a case, then, which must not pass without redress. They were quick to believe, for they were taught it, that this was an intended insult, springing from the filibustering spirit of the Yankee nation; that our government sanctioned it, and perhaps was only too eager for a war with England, as the least humiliating means of escape from the embarrassing war with the South.

Lord Palmerston, whose administration was just then at a low ebb, was equally quick to see the advantage of making political capital out of the popular indignation, and immediately set to work with a great display of energy, in preparation for war. The key-note was sounded. The *Times* and other secession newspapers eagerly caught it up, and commenced anew their savage abuse of our people and government. They reported

from day to day with theatrical flourish the active preparations going on in the War and Navy Departments for avenging the outrage. It was announced that a peremptory demand had been sent to Washington for the immediate surrender of the Southern commissioners, and that if this was refused, war would be declared at once. Punch, the comic paper, came out with a caricature representing Brother Jonathan in a very humiliating posture, eating "humble pie." This coarse joke was relished hugely by beef-eating John Bull. It required no strain upon the imagination to comprehend its pith, and was therefore exactly adapted to the literal matter-of-fact English mind. The English mind has many excellent traits; but according to the confession of English writers themselves, it is amazingly deficient in both fancy and imagination. It is literal sometimes even to stolidity. Hence an Englishman is often either an easy victim to credulity or an intense doubter; he either believes or disbelieves with all his might; and the habit of his life, therefore, is yea, yea, or nay, nay.

What shall be thought of the claims of any man to the exalted title of poet, whose imagination cannot compass the meaning of the veriest bit of Munchausenism? Some wag of a New York correspondent, in writing to a London newspaper a few months ago, perpetrated the statement that the American government had just imported from France one hundred and fifty *guillotines*, with which to cut off the heads of captured rebels! This brilliant little *canard* soon came to the notice of that "Proverbial Philosopher," — Martin Farquhar Tupper, — who thereupon indited a letter to our worthy President, protesting in the name of universal humanity against a resort to such savage barbarities!! But this is a digression.

The excitement was working well. Several war-ships were speedily put in readiness for sea. The utmost expedition was used in filling them with arms and ammunition from the Tower and the Woolwich Dock Yard ; and by working day and night and all day Sunday, — all of which was reported in the newspapers with demoniac glee, — they were ready to dispatch them for Canada early in the ensuing week. The popular mind was at last worked into a frenzy of excitement.

But just at this time an event took place, which cast an indescribable gloom over the whole nation. It was the brief illness and death of Prince Albert, the consort of the queen. A German prince, of liberal ideas, of irreproachable character, he had come amongst the English people twenty-one years before, a stranger and a foreigner ; and by his gentle manners, and wise discretion, and remarkable abilities, had worked his way up, step by step, against the jealousies of a proud aristocracy, and the prejudices of a conceited people, until he stood upon the topmost pinnacle of popularity. It was a wonderful achievement, when you consider what he had to overcome, and what he was at the outset, — a foreigner in a strange land, a German liberal, and a Lutheran protestant, with no recognized official position except that of an adviser of the queen by virtue of the marriage tie ; and even this was a disadvantage to him, inasmuch as his influence over her was looked upon with jealous distrust by every cabinet minister. Prince Albert exercised his privilege with rare discretion, and sometimes with good effect. It is asserted, with every probability of its truth, that it was through his direct influence with the queen, that the demand for the surrender of Slidell and Mason, which had been

drawn up by the cabinet with unnecessary harshness, was so modified as to offend as little as possible our national susceptibilities; and it is further stated that, almost with his dying breath, he enjoined it upon Her Majesty to sanction no measure for the commencement of hostilities against the United States, until all peaceful expedients had failed. In the death of this noble prince, America lost a true friend, and England lost a man whom she will long remember with reverence as the wise father of her future kings.

The grief for his loss was universal and sincere; and his death had the effect of staying, for the moment, the mad cry for war. The more thoughtful and the religious among the people began to be apprehensive lest the war spirit might be carried too far. They began to inquire whether it would not be wiser to wait, and learn whether or not the act of Capt. Wilkes was approved by the Washington government. The dread anticipation of a foreign war made them shrink from the responsibility of unnecessarily fanning the war-flame, and they immediately adopted measures for allaying the excitement. Meetings were called for prayer in nearly every parish, and a monster prayer-meeting was convened in Exeter Hall, which I had the fortune, or misfortune, as the case may be, to attend. Some three thousand people were assembled. Sir Culling Eardley — the President of the Evangelical Alliance — presided; and it was announced, in the printed call for the meeting, that the Earl of Shaftesbury would take part in it; but at the opening, a letter from him was read, stating that he declined to attend, lest the demonstration should be construed by the public as a censure upon the government for their course in demanding the release of the Southern commissioners. This was a

very flimsy pretext ; but as Lord Shaftesbury is connected by marriage with Lord Palmerston,—the premier,—the excuse answered very well for the innocent multitude. The truth was that both the Earl of Shaftesbury and the political leaders of the meeting were in a queer dilemma. They were the acknowledged leaders of the religious world and must stand well with it. They were also members of the order of nobility, and that order of nobility was committed, almost to a man, to the breaking down of the American Republic. Prayer against war in general was an excellent specific, but the prayers that were to be offered up to avert this threatened international war must be made with this proviso,—that they should in no wise interfere with the cherished plan of crushing Republican America. The chairman then announced that in order to avoid any implied censure of the government, and also to prevent any exciting discussion, it had been thought best that there should be no remarks made at all ; that the exercises would therefore be wholly confined to singing and prayers. The great bulk of the congregation, it was evident, had come there under a feeling of deep solemnity. They felt that a great national calamity was impending, which the Divine power alone could avert. They were fully persuaded, the majority of them, that their government had done right in demanding redress for the insult to their flag ; and, if necessary for the vindication of their national honor, they would have gone to war without hesitation. They came, therefore,—deluded though they were in their hasty and wrong assumptions,—they came there under a full sense of their responsibility as citizens and patriots, and yet humbly recognizing their dependence upon a higher power for guidance. It was impossible

not to respect this deep religious principle of the multitude, even though it was mingled with a misguided hostility against our nation.

It is not my purpose to describe this prayer-meeting. It is seldom in good taste to criticise a prayer; it never is if the spirit of the prayer be genuine. But this I may say as having a general application: that if there is any one thing in the whole province of free speech which merits and demands merciless criticism, it is the miserable attempt to hallow political government puffery by the name of Christ, and to give vent to petty national spite in a general plea for the interests of the kingdom of heaven! True piety should be respected; but cant and hypocrisy, anywhere and everywhere, deserve the severest castigation.*

I may say further, — of course in a general way, — that if there is ever a time when an Englishman is gifted with any special unction and freedom in prayer, it is when he is confessing before God the sins of America! Sunday after Sunday have I heard English clergymen pray substantially as follows: — “Deal mercifully, O Lord, with our brethren in America, for they have sinned greatly.” Again, — “O God! wilt thou speedily bring to a termination that cruel and wicked civil war which is now raging in America, and allay the fierce spirit of anger and revenge which causes brother to lift up his hand against brother in deadly strife,” &c., &c. You will perceive that no discrimination is made here between those who, in the interest of slavery, are engaged in taking the life of the nation, and those who are engaged in the Christian and patriotic work of defending it. You will perceive, also, how studied and

* An exception should here be made in favor of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, and one or two other friends of the North, who took part in this meeting.

malignant is the design of attributing to us none but the worst passions, — the passions of savages ; — while no recognition is made of those higher and holier motives by which our Christian community is actuated in the defence of our nationality and our free institutions. I have not heard from such clergymen a single petition that our rebels might be thwarted in their purpose of establishing a slave empire ; nor that they might lay down their arms, and return to their allegiance. But perhaps Englishmen would regard such a prayer as that as a violation of their principle of neutrality !

But to return : After six weeks of painful suspense, the *Trent* difficulty was solved by the receipt of Mr. Seward's reply that Mason and Slidell would be surrendered. This was nothing new to the British government, for our minister — Mr. Adams — had informally communicated this fact to Earl Russell three or four weeks before ; but in order to promote their own political interests, the British Cabinet withheld this information from the public, and vigorously pushed on their preparations for imaginary hostilities. Their military expedition to Canada, in the dead of winter, cost the lives of many officers and soldiers, and some twenty millions of dollars ; and all this for no other real purpose than to make it appear to the British people that the Americans were brought to terms solely through the energetic action of the Palmerston government. And they succeeded ; for the mass of Englishmen believe to this day that that surrender would not have been made, had it not been for the prompt measures of their government in making the demand, and in backing it up by a warlike demonstration.

This trouble was soon settled, but it gave rise to much irritation on both sides of the Atlantic. American in-

dignation was aroused by the persistent abuse of the English press; and many remonstrances appeared in the American papers against such outrageous attacks upon our government and people. The *Times* put on an air of injured innocence, and asked what *it* had done to offend the Americans. It had always been actuated by friendly motives in all it had published. It had done nothing but to offer the best of advice; and if the Americans had been wise, they would have taken its counsel all in good part, and profited by it. It was because it had a high regard for us that it had exposed our faults. The character in the old play hits off this kind of friendship with remarkable fidelity: — “I did not abuse thee, Ned; no abuse in the world, Ned, — most excellent Ned, none. I *dispraised* thee it is true; I dispraised thee that the wicked might not fall in love with thee, — in which doing, I acted the part of a careful friend!”

It would hardly be worth while, even if time would admit of it, to follow in detail the various aspects of the war as presented to a European observer during the many weary months of floundering warfare which succeeded the settlement of the Mason and Slidell question; but, if the truth must be told, there was very little that came to us over the water to inspire confidence either in the Cabinet or in the management of the army. The accounts of the enormous preparations for war, both on the land and on the sea, were indeed astounding; but, alas, how insignificant the results! Now the giant, in order to command respect, must sometimes put forth the giant's strength. If on the contrary, the lesser foe plays about him, and foils him, and catches him napping, and beards him till he is goaded on to strike, and then dodges the blow; and then,

with a back-handed stroke takes him in the rear, and tosses and tumbles him till he wearies him, and leaves him to get out of Chickahominy the best way he can,— what wonder is it that our boasting giant becomes the laughing-stock of the world? The world worships success, even though it be the success of villany; and there was something in the dashing, reckless exploits of the Southern enemy which told of military capacity; and there was, in the strict military rigor which made the South appear as a unit, something which told of a master mind in their Executive.

But if our cause suffered abroad in consequence of the incapacity and semi-treachery of our military leaders and in consequence of the seeming aimlessness of purpose of the Washington government, it suffered still more in a moral point of view by our persistent crowding out of sight the moral aspects of the struggle,— by our stubborn tardiness in accepting, on behalf of freedom, the challenge so defiantly thrown in our faces, by the South, on behalf of slavery. During the first year of the war, almost every act of our government *seemed* to show that border-state pro-slavery influence was in the ascendant; and even as late as August of last year, we had the humiliating spectacle of Mr. Lincoln announcing, in a letter to Mr. Greeley,— and which went upon the wings of the press to all parts of the world,— that he would, if he could, save the Union, either *with* or *without slavery*, as the case might be! Now this might have been a mere defining of his official obligation,— a reminder that he is simply the servant of the people, and clothed with limited powers; but, if it was a true expression of the settled purpose of the nation, or of the Northern people, it is evident that we did not deserve to succeed. Slavery was the peculiar

institution of the South. Through slavery the Southern leaders had ruled the nation for thirty years, until they became intolerant of any control, and sought to impose still further upon us by making the institution national. While they remained in the Union, we infringed upon none of their State rights; we made every concession that could be made, and some that ought never to have been made. We saw at last the danger of further concessions, and commenced, in 1856, a bold stand against the further advance of that aggressive power. They were triumphant at that election, and, as we all know, used the succeeding four years, under a corrupt government, for the incubation of their treasonable plot. In 1860, they were defeated in a fairly-contested election; and, without waiting for the incoming of the new administration, they seceded from the North, and made war upon the Federal Union. They seceded without a single grievance, except that they foresaw a limit which must come to their supreme control, and to the extension of slavery. They voluntarily threw away the protection which the Union had afforded to slavery; and all our offers of protection to their peculiar institution were scornfully rejected. The issue was fairly raised, not by us, but by them. Their challenge was — Slavery or War; no, it was Slavery *and* War, — and not only that, it was Disunion and Slavery forever! The world stood appalled at such impious audacity. Should *we*, then, after a year and a half of warfare, which had been thrust upon us against our will, — after making such immense sacrifices to rescue the nation from these wholesale robbers and murderers, lose the advantages we had already gained, and go back to the black abomination from which we were in a fair way to be delivered? Should we insist still upon

protecting the system of human slavery for the sole benefit of rebels who were ready to spit upon us and upon our guaranties?

Mr. Lincoln himself — thanks to his tardy good sense — thought better of it, on reflection. His letter to Mr. Greeley was dated the twenty-second of August of last year. Soon afterward, a deputation from the city of Chicago waited upon him for the purpose of urging upon him the policy of emancipation. He raised several objections, and indulged in some good-humored nonsense about the Pope's bull against the comet; but toward the close of his remarks he spoke more seriously, and intimated that he was giving to the question his earnest consideration; that so soon as he should become satisfied as to what was his duty, and what was the will of God, he should not hesitate to perform it. In two or three weeks after that interview, he issued the long delayed edict of emancipation.

This was the one thing needful to turn the tide of popular feeling in our favor in Europe; and it was received there with much enthusiasm by every friend of the North. A day or two after the news arrived in England, I received a congratulatory letter from the American Consul at Bristol, in which he says, "Mr. Lincoln has come at last to understand the will of God. I hope it is not too late to save our credit in heaven, as on earth."

Of course our enemies found fault with it, and sought, by every means in their power, to turn it to the disadvantage of the North. The leaders of the old British Anti-Slavery Society turned the cold shoulder upon the proclamation, and professed to see in it either a confession of our military weakness, or an attempt to stir up a servile insurrection. There was much in it for

them to condemn, and nothing to applaud. This was what we might have expected from that class of men. But, although these men proved recreant to duty and to their life-long professions, there were others who gave a hearty response to Mr. Lincoln's change of policy. A new society was formed, styled the Emancipation Society of London, for the sole purpose of giving support to the proclamation, and of diffusing correct information as to the questions, or rather the *one great* question, at issue between our North and South.

The Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, Rev. Newman Hall, Prof. Newman, Washington Wilks, and other men of influence amongst the masses, were the leaders in this movement; and they threw themselves very heartily into the work. Meetings were held under their auspices nearly every evening in the week during the past winter, in about every parish and ward and district of London and suburbs,—two or more speakers being detailed from the members of the society, to attend each meeting. The society also undertook the publication of speeches and lectures delivered upon the subjects connected with our struggle, some of which have been republished here.

Auxiliary societies were afterward established in Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and in some of the cities of Scotland. A very important work has been accomplished by them,—a work in short, which has resulted in a complete revolution in the public sentiment of England,—at least, so far as the masses are concerned. I might detail to you many instances of the rapid process of changes which came under my personal notice; but I forbear for want of time.

Considering the influences that have been at work through the hostile press, and the still more hostile aris-

toocracy, to retard this improvement in public sentiment; and considering also the tenacity with which Englishmen hold on upon their previously-formed opinions, it is rather remarkable that this change has been so rapid and so general as it has been. It can be accounted for only in accordance with the premises asserted in the earlier part of these remarks: that the *heart* of England was true to freedom at the outbreak of our war; that the *mind* of England was early perverted by falsehood and calumny; and that all that was wanted to bring both the heart and mind of that country to a right view of our struggle, was for us of the North to set ourselves *right*, before the world, upon the great principle of universal freedom; and next to lay before the masses of England the facts concerning our controversy, by which they would be enabled to judge both the North and the South. The Emancipation Proclamation has done the former, and the Emancipation Societies of England are doing the latter.

The inquiry may naturally arise here: Of what practical advantage to us is this change of sentiment in England? It is of *great* consequence to us, engaged as we now are in the redemption of our land from the blackest crime and disgrace of the present century, that we should have even the moral support of a nation like England; but aside from this, our direct political advantage is found in the fact that the great middle classes — those who represent the moral integrity and the solid strength of that people, and who now understand the moral and political bearings of this struggle — will oppose and thwart any scheme that may be devised by their government for helping the South or injuring the North. We shall hear no more of British intervention; we shall see more vigilance

on the part of the British government to prevent the fitting out of pirates to prey upon our commerce. We shall see the British Cabinet more deferential and courteous in their dealings with our government than heretofore. These will be some of the fruits of the present healthy tone of public opinion in England,—a public opinion which cannot be trifled with, and which no ministry, however hostile to us, dare disregard.

It is due to our friends in Great Britain — many of whom have sacrificed present popularity by their defence of our cause — that their friendliness and good offices should be promptly and gratefully acknowledged by the people of the United States. We owe it to ourselves to cultivate the most cordial relations of friendship with those in foreign lands who are now taking such a deep interest in our national well-being; and it would be well for us, as well as for them, if some scheme could be devised and carried into effect, for making the two peoples of England and America better acquainted with each other's opinions and feelings. This necessity is very keenly felt by loyal Americans in Europe; and attempts have been made with partial success to set in motion some agencies for accomplishing such a desirable result.

Our English friends also have seen this want, and have invited the coöperation of friendly Americans for the attainment of these ends.

The Rev. Dr. Waddington of London — a Congregational clergyman, who visited the United States a few years ago, and who has stood firmly by the North during all our troubles — recently wrote a letter to Dr. Bacon of New Haven, in which he says, —

“ I wish that some condensed and clear compendium could be furnished, to show the real progress of anti-

slavery principles in the ministers and churches of the Free States, and their decline in the religious associations of the Slave States. I once thought I would try to collect the facts for such a statement, but I cannot now command the time. We are trying to bring the American question before the Congregational Board of Ministers and 'other Denominations.' It is evident that interest is being awakened, and many who have been silent, take courage and avow their decision on the right side. But the practical question is, What are the best means for securing a better acquaintance in England with the Congregationalists and other Christian men of America? It is really amazing how little is known. I inquired of one of the secretaries of the Congregational Union (the compiler of the *Congregational Year-Book*), if he ever saw the *Congregationalist*? 'No.' 'Do you see the *Independent*?' He said, 'No.' But some moderate paper of the 'Dutch Reformed' is sent to him. Now, if this excellent brother is so denuded of the means of special information, what are we to expect of the general body? The people are left to such partial and imperfect communications as come by telegrams and correspondents of the secular press. We seldom see an American pastor on our platforms, and the instances are rare in which a Congregational minister from England finds his way to New England. If an obscure brother like myself receives so much kindness, what would be the generous reception of Newman Hall, Samuel Martin, Baptist Noel, John Graham, and other men of celebrity? The truth is, enlightened, free, and evangelical America needs a medium of communication with England."

It is to be hoped that these sentiments will be soon responded to, by some of our leading men.

But, however desirable it may be to secure the goodwill of the people of England, or of any other nation, this does not imply that we should place our entire dependence upon that goodwill for our future security. It does not imply that, when our war against the rebels is ended, we may safely settle down into a community of non-resistant lambs. Were we to do this, we should soon fall a prey to the wolves of all nations.

The warning given by Mr. Adams, our minister to England, should not be forgotten. In writing to Mr. Seward in August last, he says, "The sympathies of the higher classes of England are decidedly enlisted in the struggle, not from any particular affection for either side, *but from a longing to see the political power of the United States permanently impaired.*"

And again he writes at a later date, "The popular sentiment of Great Britain, as now developed, should be a warning to the statesmen of America, by which to regulate their action, at least for two generations." I think it must be the universal sentiment of Americans, that our army and navy should, for all future time, be in such condition as to enable us to defy the power, not only of England, but of all other hostile nations. We must never again be at the *mercy* of *any* power, whether friendly or otherwise.

If I were to sum up in a word the general opinion of Europe, in regard to the final result of our struggle, I should say that it is almost the universal belief, both among our friends and our foes, that we have undertaken an impossibility, in our attempt to reëstablish the Union; and that sooner or later we must give up the contest, and allow the South to go. But their opinion upon this point is, after all, of but little value, and of no great consequence to us, unless it should lead to interference, which it is not likely to do at present.

What concerns us far more is that we ourselves should fully comprehend, and never for a moment lose sight of, the great significance of this conflict,—its political scope, its moral importance, and the influence which every day's history of the present war is to have upon our future career. The destiny of this Republic—the destiny of this Western continent—is the greatest problem of the nineteenth century; and this destiny hangs, unquestionably, upon the result of this war. If we fail in this conflict, we shall be ground up between the upper and nether mill-stones of an insolent pro-slavery oligarchy on the one side, and the proud despotisms of Europe on the other; we shall become a hissing and a reproach among all the nations of the earth. If we succeed, we shall overthrow and exterminate the slave system of the South, which has been our curse and our shame, and shall be able to consecrate anew this vast continent to freedom and righteousness.

There is a duty, then,—a present and imperative duty,—for every citizen to perform; and that is to give all his influence, and all the encouragement in his power, for the vigorous prosecution of the war; to uphold the powers that be,—for they are of our own appointing, and we can recognize none other,—and, what is of equal if not greater importance, to keep alive the present awakened conscience of our people upon the moral aspects of the strife. There must be a merging together of diverse sentiments; there must be a softening down of political animosities; old prejudices must yield before the on-rolling of this mighty revolution; Ultra-Conservatism and Ultra-Radicalism must draw nearer together; and all the intermediate shades of political and religious opinion must be subordinated to the one great duty of the hour. We cannot expect, indeed, *absolute unanimity*

this side of the Millennium; but we can and should make the attempt to reconcile our slight differences, and work together for the common weal. This will not be so difficult, if we keep constantly in view our common danger, and remember that our strength lies in united action. Necessity requires that we should act charitably toward those who differ from us slightly on political questions; necessity calls imperatively for the exercise of patience, of good-humor, and of an enlarged philosophy. Let us bear in mind that this world is a world of compensations, — that one extreme is followed by another extreme in an opposite direction; one set of opinions is balanced by another set of opinions; and that the tendency is always toward a proper equilibrium. Things will in the end be brought round right, if we will but have patience and faith.

Even Conservatism and Radicalism are not altogether incompatible with each other, in a crisis like this. The extremes, it is true, may not be reconciled; but I trust that, for the honor of our country, incorrigible extremists are becoming more and more rare. Some Ultra-Radical has defined Conservatism, by comparing it to an obstinate wheel-horse of a coach, as being good for nothing but for the breeching, — in other words, fit for nothing but to hold back. Now, this was a very one-sided definition. There *are*, I admit, just such conservatives; but such specimens are seldom met with. If there are any now hitched to our state coach, if there are any whose only work it is to hold back and hinder, — whether their heads are made of copper or of wood, — let their breeching be cut, and let them be dropped quietly out of the state team, and be left to droop by the wayside.

But there is a *wise* Conservatism which we cannot do

without. *This*, like the *true* wheel-horse, guides and steadies the coach,—holds back in time of need, but always keeps up with the rest of the team, and does its share of pulling when “*go*” is the word. All honor, therefore, to a liberal and wise Conservatism. And, on the other hand, there may be something said in favor of Radicalism.

Every important cause needs special advocates or leaders. No great reformation was ever effected without ardent champions. Their very mission requires them to plough through long-established customs, to run contrary to deeply-rooted prejudices and predilections, and, as a matter of course, they render themselves extremely unpopular, and obnoxious to the mass of mankind. Even Divinity itself, in the person of Christ, did not escape this penalty which mankind exacts of leadership in reform. Jesus and his disciples were stigmatized by the conservative pharisees as pestilent fellows, perverting the doctrines of the fathers, and turning the world upside-down by their preaching. Grant that the leaders in reforms are almost always badly balanced characters, yet this does not necessarily, nor as a rule, destroy their influence for good. When Christ had nearly finished his mission upon earth, he was careful, above all things, to leave the interests of his church under the right leadership. We should naturally suppose that for this special agency the beloved John—that devout and gentle disciple, who was more like the Saviour than any other—would have been selected; but instead of him, Jesus chose the rash and impetuous Peter,—a man full of faults and failings and inconsistencies. At one time, on his being confronted by a maid-servant, we read of his flying into a fit of bluster and profanity, and denying his Master and best friend,

— proving himself for the moment a great moral coward. At another time, in presence of the Saviour, he fell into a sudden passion, and drew his sword, and went to cutting off ears. In short, he was about the last man that Conservatism, of any age, would have chosen for the delicate work of propagating a new faith, or establishing a new church. But there was something in the open, bold, and fervid mind of Peter, and in his power to sway the multitude, which commended him to the discriminating Saviour as the most suitable champion of the church; and we see how completely the divine wisdom was vindicated by the result of this choice. It was only about two weeks after Christ's ascension, that through that "pentecostal blast" of Peter's eloquence, three thousand persons were gathered into the church in a single day.

And so in the Lutheran Reformation, it was not Melancthon, — the chaste and classical scholar, the devout and refined Christian, — but the bold and daring Luther, — who feared neither priest nor pope, nor prince nor devil, but God only — it was the bold "radical" Luther, who overthrew the darkness of ages, and rescued the church from the grasp of Rome.

And thus it is with all reforms: we cannot do without leaders. So long as they labor in the right cause, and to the right end, let us overlook their crotchets and their faults, and let us all keep so close in their rear as to be able to give to their efforts a right direction. This I conceive to be the highest wisdom of conservatism.

Oh, let us hasten to return to the faith of the fathers, — to that doctrine which embodied itself in the noble enunciation "that all men are created equal" as regards natural rights; and that all are entitled to "life,

liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Let us remember the declaration of the Bible that "God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and by one blood redeemed them all." Let us remember that "it is not war alone with its bloody triumphs, nor commerce with its wealth, nor science with its arts, but *righteousness*, that exalteth a nation."

I believe the day of our deliverance is not far distant. Let us take counsel of Hope rather than of Doubt. The darkness of our night is beginning to be dispelled, and Hope sits smiling in the dawn of the new day.

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